

Gender Equality Index 2019. Work-life balance

Women dominate part-time employment, consigning them to jobs with poorer career progression

In 2017, the FTE employment rate in the EU was 41 % for women and 57 % for men, an increase of about 1 p.p. for both genders from 2015. This maintains the gender gap in FTE employment unchanged at 16 p.p. over the period and shows that despite the overall employment rates of women being somewhat closer to those of men^[1] than FTE statistics show, many of the jobs women are able to take are part-time. In 2018, 31 % of women and 8 % of men worked part-time^[2].

Overall FTE employment rates, which reflect the spread of part-time employment as well as overall labour-market participation, remained highly varied among Member States. The lowest (below or equal to 40 %) FTE rates for women were observed in Greece (31 %) and Italy (31 %), as well as Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Croatia and Malta (Figure 11).



The full-time equivalent employment rate of women is **41 %** and of men **57 %**

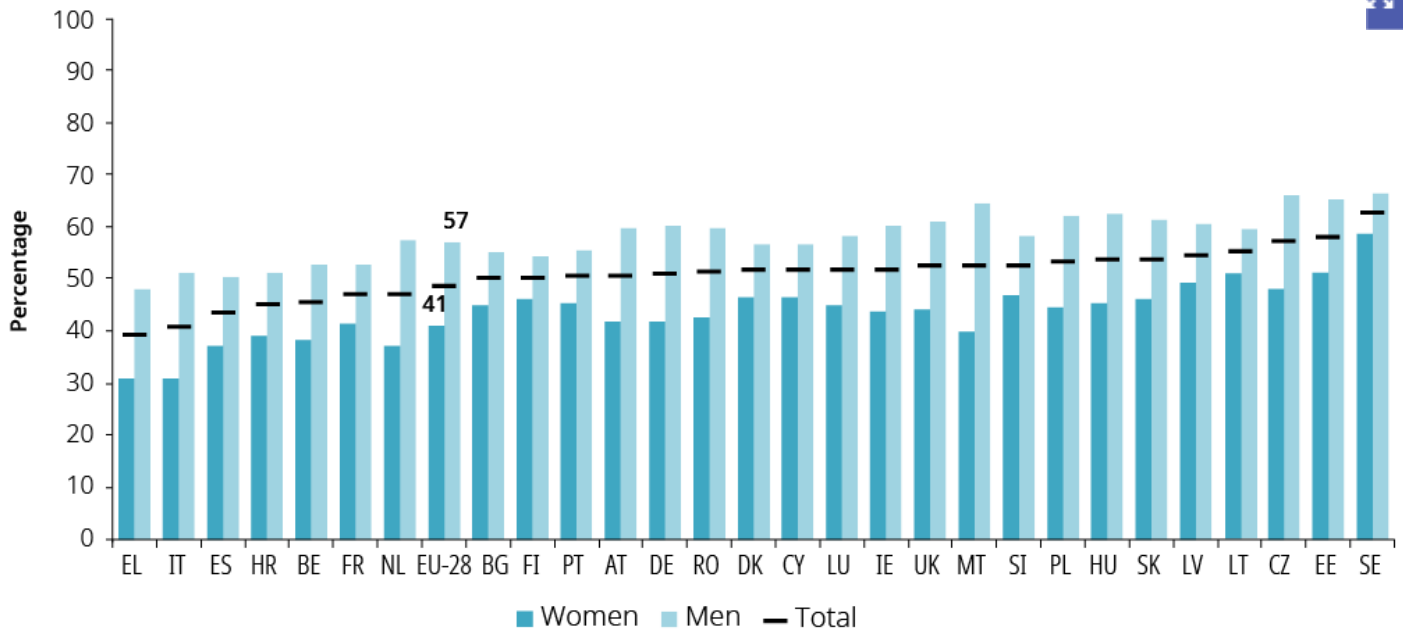


Figure 11: Full-time equivalent employment rate (FTE) by women and men, and EU Member State (15+, %), 2017

Note: Calculated as: (sum of total working hours/mean working hours on full time jobs)/population.

FTE employment gender gaps at national level also demonstrate very different labour-market opportunities for women and men. The largest gap to women’s detriment was noted in Malta (25 p.p.), with the lowest observed in Finland and Sweden (8 p.p.). No steady narrowing of gender gaps in FTE employment have been noted nationally in recent years. Although FTE gender gaps widened (by at least 1 p.p.) between 2015 and 2017 in Denmark, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands and Slovenia, they also narrowed (by at least 1 p.p.) in Cyprus, Greece, Hungary and Poland. This underlines not only the slow gains on FTE employment for both genders, but also the fragility of women’s opportunities in the labour market.

As women spend less time in paid work than men, they are also more likely to worry that their income in old age will be insufficient (Eurofound, 2018a). The gender pension gap, the gender pay gap and the weaker economic independence of women are reinforced by the concentration of women and men in certain sectors and occupations (EIGE, 2017c). Women not only remain over-represented in education, human health and social work, but their employment in these sectors also increased by 2 p.p. between 2005 and 2017 to just over 30 %.

In contrast, men's share of employment in these sectors stalled at around 8 % from 2005. Among Member States the gender gap in these fields differed significantly in 2017, varying from the narrowest in Cyprus and Romania (13 p.p.) to the widest in Finland (31 p.p.). From 2015, the gender gap narrowed (by at least 1 p.p.) in Belgium and Austria, but widened (by at least 1 p.p.) in Bulgaria, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands and Finland.

Footnotes

[1] Eurostat (lfsa_ergan): 2018 employment rate for those aged 15-64: men, 73.8 % and women, 63.3 %. The latter employment statistics in contrast to FTE, do not account for differences in part-time work prevalence between women and men.

[2] Eurostat (lfsa_eppga): part-time employment as percentage of the total employment, by sex and age (%), age group 20-64.